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RR RUEHCHI RUEHCN RUEHDT RUEHHM

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ZNR UUUUU ZZH

R 120927Z MAY 08

FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 8974

INFO RUEHZS/ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS

RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHINGTON DC

RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 1946

RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 5022

RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA 2472

RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL 4577

RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 JAKARTA 000935

SENSITIVE

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR OES/ENRC, EAP/MTS, EAP/RSP

USTR FOR MLINSCOTT, DBROOKS

USAID FOR ANE, EGAT [CBARBER, MMELNICK]

BANGKOK FOR RDM/A

NSC FOR CEQ CONNAUGHTON, VAN DYKE

USFS FOR CMACKIE

TREASURY FOR KBERG

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [SENV](#) [EAID](#) [KGHG](#) [ECON](#) [PGOV](#) [ID](#)

SUBJECT: INDONESIA'S NATIONAL PARKS - MANAGEMENT AND ENFORCEMENT KEY TO CONSERVATION SUCCESS

REF: JAKARTA 778

11. (SBU) Summary: An overview of several Indonesian national parks shows that their record in protecting flora and fauna has little correlation to budget size or numbers of forest rangers. Money is not necessarily the main problem with their performance. Improvements to management of existing financial and human resources within the parks, combined with an increase in enforcement activity to crack down on illegal wildlife trade, would have a significant impact on the long-term conservation success of these biodiversity treasures. End Summary.

Taman Nasional Bukit Barisan Selatan (TNBBS)

12. The 365,000-hectare TNBBS in southern Sumatra still contains one of the largest remaining tracts of lowland and hill rainforests on Sumatra. On paper, the park has 66 forest rangers and a \$1.2 million budget (2007 figures). In 2004, UNESCO designated BBS as a World Heritage site. TNBBS is home to at least 118 species of mammal, 300 species of bird, 45 amphibian and reptile species, and 649 species of higher plant. These include large threatened mammals, such as Sumatran tigers, Asian elephants, and Sumatran rhinoceroses.

Conservationists estimate that 45 tigers, 498 elephants (+/- 100), and 30-40 rhinos live here. (Note: There are a total of 2400-2800 elephants left in the wild in Sumatra, according to a local staff member of Flora and Fauna International. End Note.)

Taman Nasional Way Kambas (TNWK)

13. (SBU) TNWK, at one-third TNBBS's size with 130,000 hectares, had a 2007 budget of \$1.4 million and 81 forest rangers. Conservationists estimate that the park hosts 20-30 rhinos, 30-40 tigers, and 180 elephants (+/- 40). It is famous among birdwatchers -- Way Kambas has recorded over 320 bird species, out of approximately 625 in Sumatra, and 1,690 Indonesia-wide. It is a former logging concession, showing that properly managed concessions can remain a good habitat for wildlife. Although rich in wildlife (NGO workers believe the local elephant population has actually grown), forest rangers acknowledge that poaching remains a problem, and Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) staff fear that the abundance of prey such as deer and pigs indicate a decline in the tiger population.

Budgets, Size, and Performance -- Low Correlation

¶4. (U) Logging, encroachment, and road construction are taking a toll in Taman Nasional Kerinci Seblat (TNKS), as with many other national parks (reftel). The continued clearing of protected forests and evidence of poaching underscores the importance of national park management. Improving the management of financial and human resources is essential for protecting Indonesia's rich biodiversity. Take as evidence the complete extinction of Sumatran rhinos from within TNKS (at 1.4 million hectares, the largest in Sumatra), despite the third largest national park budget in Sumatra, and the largest number of forest rangers on paper (108, per 2007 records).

¶5. (SBU) In TNBBS, the white-rumped Shama, a commonly traded bird, has declined spectacularly. A WCS survey suggests that poachers have removed 3-5,000 of these birds from the park per year since 1999, based on their declining density. This bird sells for \$50-100, so trade in this species alone could be as high as half a million dollars annually (or almost half the park's current operating budget of \$1.2 million). NGO field staff point to encroachment and fragmentation of habitat on the park, and researchers at a field station in one pristine part of the rainforest refer to frequent encounters with poachers in the area. Yet, during a recent 2-night stay within the park, Emboff did not see a single forest ranger. Meanwhile, the park management is constructing a large new, 2-3 story, office building in the nearby town of Kota Agung.

¶6. (SBU) Way Kambas's much larger budget is ostensibly related to funding an "elephant training center" (with 60-plus "conflict" elephants captured and subsequently never released back into the wild), as well as 5 rhinos in a -- not yet successful --

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captive-breeding center. The captive elephants looked unhealthy and malnourished, and the elephant caretakers were feeding a newly arrived baby elephant with milk formula purchased by a foreign conservation worker because, they said, their budget was inadequate. Meanwhile, the park's management was in the process of moving into a large new office building, and the "training center" had a newly constructed, grand, gate and leisure facilities for potential tourists -- including a large disused parking lot with trees and shrubs growing up through the pavement. Emboff also twice entered the park without any sign of forest rangers in the brand new guard post at the park's entrance.

¶7. (SBU) In addition, one WCS staff who has worked in the area since 2002 says that he has only ever seen 10-15 rangers (of the total 81 recorded on paper). However, while encroachment continues in TNBBS, Way Kambas has by-and-large tackled this problem. The park's former head, Mega Haryanto, managed to convince most of prior encroachers to relocate, apparently without using coercion or paying any money, WCS field staff say in amazement.

Anecdotes of Opaque Management and Accountability

¶8. (SBU) It is unclear how national parks are using their budgets, or on what basis budgets are allocated by the Ministry of Forestry (Dephut) in Jakarta. NGOs say that there is virtually no financial record keeping or accountability. Nonetheless, large sums of donor money are going to finance these national parks. Germany and Indonesia began implementing a Debt Swap for Nature in 2007, under which funding will flow to three Sumatran national parks - Leuser, Kerinci Seblat, and Bukit Barisan Selatan. Last October, Germany committed a total of 23.5 million euros to support the Ministry of Forestry. The imbedded German advisor at Dephut who works on implementing the debt swap agreement told us that he did not have a full picture of national park budgets.

¶9. (SBU) A former head of the 1.1 million hectare Taman Nasional Gunung Leuser (TNGL), Sumatra's second largest park, divided his staff into five parts. One-fifth never showed up for work. Another one-fifth actively facilitated illegal activities such as poaching or logging. One-fifth did little more than show up for work. Another one-fifth tried to do their jobs with varying degrees of competence, while one-fifth were genuinely motivated. Over two years of effort, he was unable to fire a single employee. The best

way to improve park management, in his opinion, was to transfer control to the Ministry of the Environment, to eliminate the conflict between Dephut's industry interests and its conservation duties.

Improving Management and Accountability

¶110. (SBU) As a result, WCS considers training Dephut's Forest Protection and Nature Conservation financial staff in Jakarta on recordkeeping to be a more effective use of money than training field staff. It wants -- and is attempting -- to undertake an internal study of national park management and financial practice at Dephut, probably packaged as an academic exercise by an Indonesian university. It would like to follow this up by another "internal pilot study" to revise personnel management practice within national parks.

¶111. (SBU) The former park head mentioned above told us that there are no performance targets to measure how well park managers are doing, although Dephut does keep detailed statistics about concessions and logging activities. Without improving the performance and management of forestry staff within national parks or rationalizing the allocation of financial resources, WCS and other NGOs believe that national parks will ultimately fail to protect and preserve Indonesia's rich biodiversity. (Note: As of 2006, Dephut records show 7304 forest rangers, not including other categories of field staff such as investigators, who comprised another 1700. End Note.)

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